



HJ0038

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1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Historic newspapers provide a record of the
3 social, political, economic, and cultural history of the State
4 and a window into local history and community life; and

5 WHEREAS, The historic newspapers of Illinois are part of
6 the cultural and intellectual heritage of the citizens of
7 Illinois and constitute the premier source for the study of
8 Illinois history by students and scholars from the primary to
9 the post-graduate level; and

10 WHEREAS, The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
11 (formerly the Illinois State Historical Library) has
12 microfilmed Illinois newspapers since the 1970s and retains
13 master negative film for all newspapers filmed; and

14 WHEREAS, Most of the original newspapers filmed by the
15 Illinois State Historical Library and the Abraham Lincoln
16 Presidential Library no longer exist in print format; and

17 WHEREAS, Newspapers microfilmed prior to the establishment
18 of preservation microfilming standards in the 1980s are at risk
19 of loss through deterioration; and

20 WHEREAS, Digitization of historic newspapers from

1 microfilm revolutionizes access to this material, producing a
2 digital replica of the original newsprint, fully searchable by
3 keyword and browsable by date, available to anyone, anywhere
4 with access to a computer; and

5 WHEREAS, Digitization provides a long-term preservation
6 solution for newspapers through the application of digital
7 preservation standards, including redundant backup and
8 storage, refreshment, migration, emulation, and other digital
9 asset management strategies; and

10 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois has received more than \$5
11 million in federal funds since 1988 through the United States
12 Newspaper Program (administered by the National Endowment for
13 the Humanities) to inventory and preserve on microfilm our
14 newspaper heritage; and

15 WHEREAS, The National Digital Newspaper Program builds on
16 the investment of the United States Newspaper Program with the
17 proposed digitization of newspapers from all fifty states for
18 inclusion in the American Chronicle digital repository at the
19 Library of Congress; and

20 WHEREAS, Digitization of historic newspapers is also
21 supported by other major funding agencies such as the Institute
22 for Museum and Library Services and the Illinois State Library;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, The American library community is continuously
3 developing and refining best practices for the digitization of
4 newspapers from microfilm; and

5 WHEREAS, Digitization of newspapers from microfilm
6 requires duplication of the master negative for use in
7 scanning; and

8 WHEREAS, The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and its
9 parent body, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, have
10 shown reluctance to make negative film available for
11 duplication so that other institutions might digitize the
12 Illinois newspaper heritage; and

13 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois upholds the right of its
14 citizens to have full access to information, as expressed in
15 the "Guiding Principles for Illinois Libraries" of the Illinois
16 State Library; therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
18 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
19 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that the Abraham Lincoln
20 Presidential Library be encouraged to share these cultural
21 assets with the citizens of the State of Illinois by making the

1 master negative microfilm of Illinois newspapers available for
2 duplication for use in digitization projects by Illinois
3 libraries and adhering to the best practices and responsible
4 stewardship; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
6 presented to the Executive Director of the Abraham Lincoln
7 Presidential Library and the Board of Trustees of the Illinois
8 Historical Preservation Agency.